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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SP](#)  
SUBJECT: SPANISH PREVIEW OF APRIL GAERC

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[1](#)B. MADRID 403

Classified By: ADCM William H. Duncan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Poloff discussed anticipated agenda items for the April 27-28 GAERC with MFA European Correspondent Maria Luisa Benitez-Donoso April 24. Benitez-Donoso said that Council conclusions will be issued on Burma, Iran, and Sri Lanka, while the Eastern Partnership, Croatia, Moldova, Ukraine, the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), and President Obama's April 5 Prague visit will all be items for discussion.

[1](#)2. (C) Burma: Benitez-Donoso confirmed Spanish MFA Subdirector General for the Pacific, Southeast Asia and Philippines Jose Luis Garcia Galan's previous statements regarding Burma (reftel), stating that the EU Common Position would be rolled over and conclusions issued reiterating the EU's concern for the humanitarian situation in the country. Despite the fact that sanctions will not be eased, Benitez-Donoso again stressed the GOS' well-known lack of confidence in the efficacy of sanctions and indicated that Spain is cautiously optimistic about 2010 elections. "We look forward to the unveiling of a new U.S. policy with Burma and hope that it will include direct dialogue with Burmese authorities," she added.

[1](#)3. (C) Iran: Benitez-Donoso said that Spain welcomes the U.S. participation in the E3 3 process and fully supports the new policy of engagement with Iran. The conclusions to be issued by the Council call for Iran's commitment to serious engagement and compliance with its international obligations. Benitez-Donoso confirmed that there is no move at this point to tighten sanctions, and indeed this would not be an initiative Spain would support. She added that the GOS thinks it important that talks continue within the UN framework and that all should give the "open-handed" approach the opportunity to succeed.

[1](#)4. (C) Sri Lanka: The Council conclusion issued on Sri Lanka will call for additional UN presence in the country, as well as international organizations' presence, explained Benitez-Donoso. She added that the EU will also call on India to play a role in the supply of additional humanitarian aid.

[1](#)5. (C) MEPP: Benitez-Donoso said that there will be discussion on the MEPP, and FM Moratinos is expected to debrief the Council on his April 15-16 trip to the region and meetings with Palestinian and Israeli authorities. (While in the region, Moratinos met with Palestinian National Authority PM Salam Fayad, Palestinian FM Riyad el Malki, PLO peace negotiator Saeb Erekat, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, Vice PM and MOD Ehud Barak, and FM Avigdor Lieberman). According to Benitez-Donoso, the GOS is interested in clearly articulating the EU's priorities in the region: a two-state solution, freezing of settlements in the West Bank, and

resolution of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. She added that the GOS strongly believes that Syria has a role to play in the process.

¶16. (C) Ukraine and Moldova: Benitez-Donoso explained that there must be internal political consensus in the Ukraine before serious engagement with the EU can ensue and that the EU should send a serious signal to President Yushchenko and PM Tymoshenko regarding their mismanagement of the economy and other issues important to the country's stability. Similarly, she said, Chisinau's government must make changes that demonstrate a genuine respect for human rights if Moldova wants to approach the EU.

¶17. (C) Eastern Partnership Summit: Benitez-Donoso opined that Belarus President Lukashenka would not attend the summit, but could not confirm. In any case, she said, other countries (implying Moldova) with similar reform issues would be present.

¶18. (C) Croatia: Benitez-Donoso explained that the Commission will present different possible solutions on the bilateral border dispute, but opined that most EU member states think that the dispute is one that should be solved internally and not linked with accession aspirations.  
CHACON